



THE VISION OF OUR CHURCH

DEPENDING on Christ, we will **REACH** our World with the Gospel,
to see lives completely **TRANSFORMED**.

The vision of our church is to complete the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). In that, our mission is made clear and our church expresses this through three main purposes and six core values.

DEPENDING ON CHRIST IN ALL THINGS

In John 15:5 Jesus says; "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." At Third Avenue Church, and as followers of Christ, we are dependent on Jesus for everything, because apart from Him we can do nothing. We must depend on Christ in all things and for all things just as an infant child depends on his parents for his welfare.

Core Value – We Depend On Christ By Relying on The Word. At Stone Creek Church, we believe that the Word of God is our standard, not a suggestion. It is not a collection of wise sayings and sage advice that is there incase we need it. Rather, It is the very Words of God (2 Timothy 3:16), inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21), and perfectly infallible throughout the ages (Psalm 19:7). Therefore, we view the Bible as our standard for living. We look to it as a collection of commands for righteous living and worship to our Lord. As Joshua 23:6 says, we will be strong to do all that is written in it... turning aside from it neither to the right or the left.

Core Value – We Depend on Christ In Constant Prayer. At Stone Creek Church, we believe that Prayer is our first response, not a last resort. Once again, Jesus says in John 15:7; "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you." Abiding in Christ, depending on Him in all things, opens the floodgates of heaven. Everything that we desire within God's will, is available to us by simply praying. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says to "pray without ceasing." This means that prayer isn't something we turn to only when we've exhausted all of our other options. No, prayer is our first option. Prayer isn't our final hope, rather prayer is our first hope. By running to the arms of Christ with our prayers first, we show that he is the one in which we place our trust and dependance.

Core Value – We Depend on Christ in Authentic Worship. At Stone Creek Church, we believe that Worship is a lifestyle of joyful obedience, not reluctant observance. Romans 12:1 says: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your

spiritual worship." But being a living sacrifice can be seen by some as a spiritual obligation; as a works based religion that produces reluctant observance. That's why joyful obedience is necessary. John 15:8-11 makes it clear that our joy increases and our love for God is more real when we submit to his commands willingly. Therefore, in a lifestyle of worship, we depend on Christ to give us an abundant life filled with love and joy. Although worship is defined as a lifestyle, cooperate worship is still very much a part of the life of a believer. We believe that in coming together as a body and lifting up praise and glory to our God, we grow closer to him and one another (Hebrews 10:24-25)

REACHING OUR WORLD WITH THE GOSPEL

In Mark 16:15 Jesus tells his follower to "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." At Stone Creek Church and as followers of Christ we recognize that it is our responsibility to reach our community and our world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Evangelism must be natural, relational, and intentional. We believe that reaching the world with the Gospel is not a mission given to the spiritual elite, but to all followers of Christ. It is each of our calling to be missionaries in our families, our jobs, our schools, and our neighborhoods. It is also our responsibility to do everything within our ability to see people evangelized all throughout the world by either going, sending, or supporting foreign missionaries.

Core Value – We Will Reach Our Neighbors Through **Relational Outreach.** At Stone Creek Church we believe that reaching our neighbors takes more than inviting them to church. In 1 Corinthians 9:22 we see where Paul became "all things to all people that by all means [he] might save some." Paul wasn't merely putting on a show in order to appeal to the masses. Rather, he was engaging in their world by journeying with them as a friend. Paul's main approach to evangelism, much like Jesus, was relationships. We hope that through serving our neighbors that we can begin real friendships, that will lead to spiritual conversations.

Core Value – We Will Reach The World Through **Strategic Missions.** At Stone Creek Church we believe that reaching our world takes more than writing a check. Matthew 9:37-38 tells us that "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" so we must pray for God to send harvesters. Romans 10:13-15 tells us that in order for people to believe in Christ, someone must be sent. International missions is a huge undertaking, but is a worthy undertaking; one in which the local church must be engaged. For many churches, their relationship with their missionaries merely consists of sending an occasional support check. We want to have a fully engaged relationship with our missionaries and agencies where we connect with them as if they were a part of our local body. We will pray for them, communicate with them, serve with them, and partner with them in a variety of ways that makes our shared ministry of reaching the world more fruitful.

JOINING IN THE TRANSFORMING MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us “therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” Transformation is a key word in our faith. Without transformation we are left in our sin and destined for eternal destruction. With transformation we are made completely new with a new life and a new destination. Through the power of the Holy Spirit the worst sinner can become a righteous minister for Christ. We want to join with the Holy Spirit in his work of spiritual transformation.

Core Value – We Will See Lives Completely Transformed Through Intentional Discipleship. At Stone Creek Church we believe that *Spirit led transformation happens best in Spirit filled community.* The Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 makes it clear that one of our main purposes on this earth is to make disciples. We do this by “teaching them to observe all that [Jesus] commanded.” It is not merely the job of the individual to seek spiritual maturity, but it is the job of the Church to be intentional in the process of that individual's sanctification. We believe that based upon verses like 2 Timothy 2:2 where it says; “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also,” that the process of intentional discipleship happens best in the construct of Spirit filled community. Every believer in the local church, is responsible for the spiritual welfare of those in the body. We are to care for one another, carry the burdens of one another, pray for one another, correct one another, be accountable for one another, rebuke one another, teach one another, and serve one another. The Biblical plan for discipleship is clear, and it requires one another.